

What is Claimed is:

1. A method of processing an item at least partially formed of a hydrophilic polymeric material to produce a reduced protein affinity, said method comprising preventing the formation of insoluble ionic materials in or on the item during processing.
2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
 - hydrating the item in a solution free of multivalent cations;
 - processing the item in the presence of a buffer; and
 - flushing the buffer from the item using a solution free of multivalent cations.
3. The method of Claim 2, further comprising tumble-polishing of the item in a polishing slurry in the presence of the buffer.
4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the polishing slurry comprises glass polishing beads.
5. The method of Claim 3, wherein the polishing slurry comprises a phosphate buffer.
6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the item is processed in an alkaline aqueous solution.
7. The method of Claim 3, wherein the polishing slurry comprises a borate buffer.
8. The method of Claim 3, wherein the polishing slurry comprises a buffer selected from an acetate buffer, a citrate buffer, a carbonate buffer, and mixtures thereof.
9. The method of Claim 3, wherein the polishing slurry comprises a buffer system of mixed anions.
10. The method of Claim 2, wherein the step of flushing the buffer from the item in a solution free of multivalent cations is carried out at an elevated temperature.

11. The method of Claim 2, further comprising equilibrating the item in a saline solution.
12. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of preventing the formation of insoluble ionic materials in or on the item during processing comprises the exclusion of multivalent cations from a processing solution.
13. An ocular item processed according to the method of Claim 1.
14. A method of polishing an ocular item, said method comprising:
 - forming an ocular item at least partially from a hydrophilic material;
 - hydrating the ocular item in a solution free of multivalent cations;
 - polishing the ocular item in a polishing slurry solution comprising a buffer and a solvent free of multivalent cations; and
 - flushing the buffer from the ocular item using a solution free of multivalent cations.
15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the polishing slurry solution comprises glass polishing beads and the buffer comprises a phosphate buffer.
16. The method of Claim 15, further comprising maintaining the polishing slurry solution at a pH of at least 7.
17. The method of Claim 14, further comprising equilibrating the ocular item in a balanced saline solution.
18. The method of Claim 14, wherein the flushing step is carried out at an elevated temperature.
19. An ocular item polished according to the method of Claim 14.

20. A system for processing an item at least partially formed of a hydrophilic material to produce a reduced protein affinity, said system comprising:

 a hydrating chamber for hydrating the item in a solution free of multivalent cations;

 a tumble-polisher containing a polishing slurry solution comprising a phosphate buffer and a solvent free of multivalent cations; and

 a flushing mechanism for removing the phosphate buffer from the item.

21. A polishing slurry for polishing an ocular item, said polishing slurry comprising:

 an aqueous solution free of multivalent cations;

 a plurality of polishing elements dispersed in the aqueous solution; and

 a phosphate buffer.

22. An ocular item having a reduced protein affinity, said ocular item being at least partially formed of a hydrophilic material, and comprising a generally transparent body bounded by at least one surface, said body and said surface being substantially free of insoluble salts capable of binding to proteinaceous substances.

23. The ocular item of Claim 22, comprising an intraocular lens having at least one haptic extending from the generally transparent body.

24. The ocular item of Claim 22, comprising a non-hydrophilic core with a coating of a hydrophilic polymer.

25. A method of processing an item at least partially formed of a hydrophilic polymeric material, containing organic aromatic structures, to produce a reduced protein affinity, said method comprising preventing the formation of complexes of multivalent cations with said aromatic structures, in or on the item during processing.

26. A method of processing an item at least partially formed of a hydrophilic polymeric material, said method comprising inducing the formation of insoluble ionic materials in or on the item during processing.

27. The method of Claim 26, further comprising:

hydrating the item in a solution containing multivalent cations;
processing the item in the presence of a buffer; and
flushing the buffer from the item using an aqueous solution.

28. A method of processing an item at least partially formed of a hydrophilic polymeric material, containing organic aromatic structures, said method comprising inducing the formation of complexes of multivalent cations with said aromatic structures, in or on the item during processing.

29. An intra-ocular lens comprising a lens body portion and at least one haptic, said at least one haptic treated to have an increased protein affinity, and said lens body treated to have a decreased protein affinity.